

**2015 POLICE SERGEANT
PROMOTIONAL EXAMINATION
STUDY GUIDE**

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SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

A. OVERVIEW

This Study Guide is designed to assist candidates in their preparation for the Police Sergeant promotional examination. The examination consists of four phases:

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| ○ Phase I | Open-Book Multiple-Choice | October 6, 2015 |
| ○ Phase II | Closed-Book Multiple-Choice | October 6, 2015 |
| ○ Phase III | Written Work Sample | October 8, 2015 |
| ○ Phase IV | Oral Board | Week of November 1, 2015 |

The scheduled dates are subject to change in the event of unforeseen circumstances, beyond the control of the Civil Service Commission, which may necessitate such action. Any deviations from this schedule will be documented, and applicable notifications will be made.

Each phase of the examination will be weighted twenty-five (25%) percent of the total exam score, before seniority points are added to passing scores.

The examinations are designed on the basis of information obtained from an extensive job analysis of the Columbus Police Sergeant classification. The job analysis provides a description of the duties of sergeants and identifies the job tasks and the knowledge required to perform effectively in these jobs.

This study guide contains information on study skills and test-taking strategies that may help you improve your score. Several different study techniques are discussed to help you find one that works for you. Also contained in this booklet is information about all phases of the exam. Areas covered include test formats, test-taking strategies, and grading methods specific to each phase of the exam.

The exam reading list, important test-related dates and other useful material may be found on the Civil Service Commission website at www.csc.columbus.gov.

B. INFORMATION SESSIONS

Prior to the administration of the examination, the Civil Service Commission will hold information sessions to help candidates prepare for the test. The sessions will include additional information on all test phases. ***It is to your advantage to attend one of these information sessions so that you have a clear understanding of what to expect during each phase of the test.***

The information sessions are scheduled for September 15 at 2:00 p.m. and September 17 at 8:00 a.m. These sessions will be held at 750 Piedmont Road in the Civil Service Commission Testing Center.

In addition to providing general information about each phase of the exam, each information session will also include a video of the performance of two mock candidates during the same oral board exercise. The purpose of the video is two-fold; candidates will see the oral board process from beginning to end and secondly,

candidates will have an opportunity to view reasonably good and comparatively bad candidate's presentations. Following the video, a representative from Civil Service will discuss some of the behaviors exhibited by each mock candidate and also provide suggestions on ways to help improve communication skills and study for the oral board phase of the exam. Additionally, we will cover the score computations for the exam.

SECTION II: STUDY SKILLS

The following section describes study techniques that may be useful in preparing for the examination. You may use your own method of studying or use one or a combination of the methods presented here. To find a more effective method, you may try the alternatives discussed below to determine a method that works best for you.

A. CONCENTRATION TECHNIQUES

You must concentrate while studying in order to do well on the examination. There are several things that will aid your focus during study sessions.

1. **Make the material more interesting or meaningful.** One way to do that is to apply it to yourself by relating it to your own personal experiences. For example, when studying, try to relate the concepts to something you have done or something you have seen someone else do.
2. **Eliminate distractions from your environment.** These distractions compete for your attention, interfere with your concentration, and "turn off" your memory of the material. It is difficult for people to pay attention to several things at the same time. Instead, they usually switch back and forth, paying attention first to one thing and then to another. Any material that did not receive attention will not be remembered. This means that listening to the radio while you are studying or studying in a noisy area may leave gaps in your memory of the material you are trying to learn.
3. **Eliminate internal distractions.** Avoid trying to learn or memorize material when you are tired or hungry. Fatigue reduces the amount of material that you can remember. Both fatigue and hunger make concentration difficult.
4. **Use the check-mark technique.** This technique involves keeping a separate sheet of paper beside you and marking a check on it each time your mind wanders. This makes you aware of how often you are not concentrating and forces you to keep focused. Too many checks might indicate that a different study time could allow you to concentrate better and use your time more effectively.

B. READING COMPREHENSION TECHNIQUES

You must comprehend the material if you expect to remember it during the examination. There are several things that you can do that will help you comprehend the material.

1. Page-at-a-Time Method

This method involves stopping at the bottom of each page and summarizing the content in a few sentences. Ask yourself, "What did the author say on this page?"

The page-at-a-time method makes you concentrate by forcing your mind to focus on the material while it is still fresh.

2. **Paragraph Method**

This method involves stopping at the end of each paragraph and summarizing it into one sentence. Simply ask yourself, "What was this paragraph meant to convey?" This helps to ensure that you understand what you are reading. It will also be helpful to identify the types of sentences and paragraphs you are reading. This approach allows you to identify where the important information is in the material.

- a. Identify types of sentences by function.
 - Topic sentences are controlling ideas
 - Supporting sentences explain and prove the main idea
 - Concluding sentences sum up the discussion
- b. Identify types of paragraphs.
 - Introductory paragraphs give the main idea
 - Expository paragraphs present new information
 - Transitional paragraphs tie information together
 - Summarizing paragraphs restate main ideas and draw conclusions

3. **Organizational Pattern Method**

This method involves determining how the author is presenting the material. Once you have identified an author's organizational pattern, you are able to better organize both your note taking and your thinking. There are several types of organizational patterns:

- a. **Process Pattern**—in this pattern, steps are presented in sequence. A fire suppression procedure, for example, would be described step by step.
- b. **Increasing Importance Pattern**—this pattern presents information from the least important to most important.
- c. **Decreasing Importance Pattern**—using this pattern, the author organizes information from most important to least important.
- d. **Cause and Effect Pattern**—with this pattern, when you identify a cause or a problem, you are prompted to look for the effect or the solution.
- e. **Compare or Contrast Pattern**—this pattern involves presenting similarities or differences among theories, ideas, procedures, etc.

4. **SQ3R: A Method for Studying**

The symbols SQ3R stand for SURVEY, QUESTION, READ, RECITE, and REVIEW. These five elements make up a set of study habits that have proven successful for many test-takers.

- a. **SURVEY:** To survey is to find the limits or borders of an area. Surveying the material to be studied is the first step in the SQ3R method. This step allows you to distinguish between important information and unimportant information.

The most obvious way to survey a body of information is to scan it from start to

finish. By skimming over the pages, you will get an idea of what is to come and how long it will take to cover the material. This will help you to break the assignment down into reasonable time blocks. In most textbooks, this type of survey is made much easier through chapter summaries. Chapter summaries can give a quick overview of the important parts or pieces of the chapter. If you look at the chapter itself, you will see that it is usually broken down into smaller parts or pieces through the use of headings. Bold headings introduce big or important elements; smaller headings introduce sub areas of these important elements. These headings can provide an important road map through the chapter. Skimming helps you develop broad questions.

- b. **QUESTION:** Try to formulate questions about the text you are about to read. Finding the answers to these questions will give the material that you are reading more meaning and will help you focus your attention.

There are several ways to develop these questions. One way is to begin with the list of headings from the chapter outline. Write a question for each major and minor heading.

- c. **READ:** For most people, reading means the same thing as studying. Reading is important, but it will be done more effectively when the survey and question steps have been completed.

Material should be read in small "chunks" that you identified in the survey stage. One section might be all of the material under a major heading. If several pages are included under a major heading, divide it up into smaller sections separated by minor headings. Try to determine how many sections will be read in a given study session. Once you are able to answer the questions you developed in the previous step, you can move on to the next section. Be sure you understand the material in the section you are reading before you move on to the next section. A good time to take breaks is between these sections, not in the middle of them.

It is important that you understand the material you are reading. One way to do this is to keep a list of all unfamiliar terms and their meanings. The quicker you get to know the meaning of all the terms, the more effective your study practices will be. You might want to keep a notebook of these terms as well as all-important terms. You will find that this notebook of terms will be a big help in preparing for the closed book examination.

To become a more active participant in the studying process, you might also want to mark or underline the text while you are reading. This will also help you to focus on the major ideas and keep you from getting bogged down with details. Reviewing the material will be easier since you have already given yourself some hints and associations that will aid in later recall.

Highlight or underline key words and concepts and make notes to yourself in the margins. If you choose to use the underlining and marking method, here are a few guidelines:

- i) Read the whole section before doing any underlining or marking.
- ii) Don't mark or underline too much; the value of the technique lies in

- highlighting only the most important material.
- iii) Use ink if possible so that the underlining and notes do not disappear or become unclear in the course of studying.
 - iv) Use symbols as much as possible. For example, use "?" as a symbol for questions you have; use "*" to stand for a particularly important idea.

The act of identifying and choosing the most important material to be highlighted will make recalling this information in the chapter easier at a later point in time.

- d. **RECITE:** An important step in this method is the recite step. Recitation will help you to remember the information that you just read.

Recitation does not have to be out loud, but it should be formal. Don't just look over the information and say to yourself, "Now I know it." The point is that you should recite the information that you are trying to learn. This can be done in several ways. One popular method is to close the book and try to repeat what you have just read. Then check to see if you were correct. A second way is to answer questions about the material you have just read.

Reciting material with the assistance of another individual is also helpful. You can ask each other questions about portions of the material, which will make you recite the material in a very formal way. Choosing someone who is familiar with the material is not necessary. The person only has to be able to recognize that what you have said is what is written in the book or in your notes.

In order to be most effective, recitation should take place quite soon after you've first learned or read the material. This is important because the greatest amount of information is lost or forgotten right after it is first learned.

Don't try to recite too much information at once. Depending on the number of pages covered, this might be all of the information in one major heading or even one subheading. A whole chapter is certainly too large a unit for recitation purposes.

- e. **REVIEW:** The last step of the SQ3R method is review. When you have finished studying a block of material such as a chapter, you should review what you have learned. This can be done through reciting or through answering specific questions. The point is that you should go back over the material once you think it has been learned.

The second form of review is done just before you begin a new study session. In this form of review, you are actually preparing yourself for new learning by strengthening learning. This helps to ensure that any old learning that is needed as a basis for new learning is correct and available.

The final form of review is done before a test and is most effective in a group with other test takers. This cuts down on some of the drudgery of pre-test studying and can increase the meaning of the information. It is sometimes easier to remember the information if you think back to who said what and how the review conversation went.

C. NOTE-TAKING SYSTEMS

1. Cornell Note-Taking System

Divide the paper into two columns: the note-taking column (*usually on the right*) is twice the size of the questions/key word column (*on the left*). The student should leave five to seven lines, or about two inches, at the bottom of the page.

- a. Record – While reading source material, use the note-taking column to record the text using shorthand or abbreviations.
- b. Question - As soon as possible, formulate review questions based on the notes in the right-hand column. Writing questions helps to clarify meanings, reveal relationships, establish continuity, and strengthen memory. Also, the writing of questions sets up a perfect stage for exam-studying later.
- c. Recite - Cover the note-taking column with a sheet of paper. Then, looking at the questions or key-words in the question and key column only, say aloud, in your own words, the answers to the questions, facts, or ideas indicated by the key-words.
- d. Reflect - Reflect on the material by asking yourself questions, for example: "What's the significance of these facts? What principle are they based on? How can I apply them? How do they fit in with what I already know? What's beyond them?"
- e. Review - Spend at least ten minutes every week reviewing all your previous notes. If you do, you'll retain a great deal for current use, as well as, for the exam.
- f. Summarize - After studying, use the space at the bottom of each page to summarize the notes on that page.

2. Questions-in-the-Margin System for Reading Textbooks

- a. Survey the entire chapter.
- b. Return to first paragraph and read to determine "what is important?"
- c. Write a brief question about the key points in the margin.
- d. Underline or highlight key words, phrases, or sentences which answer your questions.

D. MEMORY TECHNIQUES

1. Distributive vs. Massed Practice

Distributive practice involves dividing your study time over many days and taking breaks, such as studying for 50 minutes with a 10 minute break each hour. This method reduces fatigue and boredom. Also, motivation is stronger in short blocks of time.

Massed practice is a method also called cramming. This method is generally useful for creative processes, for example, when writing a paper.

2. Recitation and repetition are important in transferring information from short-term memory to long-term memory. More material is retained when a greater proportion of study time is spent reciting.
3. Mnemonic devices are techniques a person can use to help them improve their ability to remember something. It's a memory technique to help your brain better encode and recall important information. For example, elementary school students are often taught to remember the names of all five Great Lakes by using the

acronym **HOMES**; **H**uron, **O**ntario, **M**ichigan, **E**rie and **S**uperior.

E. VISUALIZATION

A concept map or word diagram can help you to visualize material. This is an outline in a flow chart format that shows key points and how they are related. It can be used to reinforce important facts, clarify difficult passages, organize and pull together ideas, and can be used as a review. For example, there is a five step process for risk assessment in the workplace;

- Identify the hazards
- Decide who might be harmed and how
- Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions
- Record your significant findings
- Review your assessment and update if necessary

By drawing or simply visualizing an image like the one below, one can remember this process.



From left to right as with reading;

- The rectangle with the blue shape in the upper left hand corner represents a driver's license, also known as a photo ID. This image should trigger the word "IDENTIFY".
- The yellow lightning bolt represents a potential threat. This image should trigger the word "HARM".
- The scales, rendered in stark black and white, represent decisive judgment. This image should trigger the word "EVALUATE".
- The red cassette tape represents the act of establishing documentation. This image should trigger the word "RECORD". The red color was chosen to represent significance such as a teacher's pen, a red alert or a "red flag".
- The green human brain represents analytical assessment. This image should trigger the word "REVIEW". The green color was chosen to represent currency and monetary reward. Thus, the end of the process achieves review and update resulting in an eventual payoff of some sort.

Imagery and association is often very personalized. If it helps you to remember information or processes, that is what matters.

SECTION III: PHASES I & II—MULTIPLE-CHOICE

A. TEST FORMAT

The first phase of the examination will be an open-book multiple-choice exam. This part of the exam is set in a multiple-choice format designed to test knowledge that does not require memorization, but can be retrieved from source materials. The items on this exam will be written from the sources included on the reading list. There will be approximately seventy (70) to one hundred (100) items on this exam. Answers will be recorded on a scan enabled answer sheet and only responses on that sheet will be scored.

You will be permitted to use all the sources on the reading list for this exam. However, you must bring your own sources to the exam, and you may not share sources during the examination. Sources will be subject to inspection at the test site to ensure that no additional summary pages have been added.

The second phase of the examination will be a closed-book multiple-choice exam. This part of the exam is set in a multiple-choice format designed to test knowledge that is taken totally from memory without benefit of referencing source materials. You will not be permitted to use any of the sources on the reading list for this exam. Phase II of the exam will be given the same day as phase I.

The items on phase II will be written from the sources included on the reading list. There will be approximately seventy (70) to one hundred (100) questions on this exam. Answers will be recorded on a scan enabled answer sheet and only responses on that sheet will be scored. Test items will be developed from the sources referenced on the reading list.

You are advised to arrive at the test site at least fifteen (15) minutes prior to the beginning of each phase of the examination. The two multiple-choice examinations will be separated by a break for lunch.

B. ITEMS ASSIGNED & SAMPLE QUESTIONS

The table on the following page shows the number of multiple-choice items from each source assigned to Commission analysts to draft. The multiple-choice exams are planned to contain somewhere between 70 and 100 items each. SME ratings will determine which items will be used and whether items should be on the open or the closed-book exam. Based on years of discussions with SMEs, there are some things that sergeants need to know always and instantly (active memory) and some things that sergeants merely need to know where to find (passive memory). The closed-book exam tests active memory and the open-book exam tests passive memory. Though different, both are equally important. Examples of both types of questions are shown below.

Table 1: Item Writing Assignments

Source	Number of Items Assigned
Arrest, Search, & Seizure Manual / Legal Updates	30
Emergency Operations Manual	30
FOP Contract	24
Supervisor's Manual	40
Rules of Conduct	4
Policy Statements	2
Criminal Complaint Manual	10
General Offenses Code	10
Traffic Code	10
Fleet Safety Manual (is located in the Directives Reference Section)	4
Patrol Standard Operating Procedures	30
Division Directives (3.02, 3.23, 3.25, 3.27, 3.28, 3.40, 3.50, 3.57, 3.58, 3.65, & 3.90)	32
Division Directives (all other directives not listed above)	32
Application of Knowledge—These items may be written from any of the sources.	40
Total	298

The table is only an indication of the distribution of the questions that will be on the tests. Most items on the exams will be written in one of three styles: question, sentence completion or fill in the blank. Some application of knowledge items may require a true/false or a yes/no response.

These examples are taken from the 2013 exam.

Question: (developed from the Division Directives – open-book)

Officer Jennifer Jones-Wheeler gave birth to her first child on March 15, 2012. With her physician's consent, she elected to take six weeks off after the birth of the child before returning to duty. On December 15, 2012, Officer Jones-Wheeler requested 12 consecutive weeks of leave to care for her mother, who had been diagnosed with dementia. How many of the 12 requested weeks of leave would Officer Jones-Wheeler be guaranteed to care for her mother under FMLA?

- A. none
- B. six
- C. twelve

Sentence Completion: (developed from the FOP Contract - open-book)

Temporary assignments will normally not exceed

- A. 6 pay periods
- B. 6 months
- C. 9 weeks
- D. 12 months

Fill in the Blank: (developed from the FOP Contract – open-book)

Each member may, during the month of January, convert a maximum of _____ hours of sick time to _____, available the first full pay period beginning in February.

- A. 24; vacation time
- B. 48; personal emergency leave
- C. 56; personal emergency leave
- D. 56; vacation time

Application of Knowledge: (developed from one or more reading list sources – closed-book)

A spontaneous fight occurs outside of a bar in your precinct, you are the on-duty precinct supervisor. Multiple officers are trying to subdue a group of individuals who are fighting. Three officers discharge their Tasers and target the same individual. The individual is subdued but not seriously injured. You are nearby and arrive at the scene.

Is an investigative letter required regarding the use of the Tasers?

- A. yes
- B. No

This incident would be considered a Level _____ Action-Response Level of Control.

- A. 3
- B. 4
- C. 5
- D. 6
- E. 7

C. MARKING THE ANSWER SHEET

All of the questions on the closed-book portion of the examination are multiple-choice. You are to mark your answers (A, B, C, etc.) on the separate scan enabled answer sheet that you will be given during the examination. The answer sheet will be scored by machine so it is important that you follow marking instructions carefully.

When you use the answer sheet during the examination, follow these instructions:

1. Make good dark marks that completely fill in the blank.
2. Completely erase any changed answers.

3. Make one, and only one, mark for each question.
4. Frequently check that the question number in the test booklet corresponds with the number of the space you are marking on the answer sheet.
5. Use only the special pencils you will be given during the examination. Do not use any type of pen.
6. Follow the test monitor's instructions carefully for marking your Candidate Identification Number on the answer sheet. This is extremely important because this is the only source used for identification.
7. Although you are encouraged to mark in the test booklet, your score will be based only on the answers recorded on the computer answer sheet.

D. TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES

Here is a list of test-taking strategies you should remember:

1. Read the directions carefully.
2. Read each question carefully. Try to answer the question before you look at the answers provided. If you know the answer, compare your answer to the available choices and pick the closest alternative.
3. Find clue words. Words such as all, none, never, and every, harden the meaning of the sentence by indicating that there are no exceptions. As a rule, alternatives with these words have a lesser chance of being correct. Words such as some, sometimes, may, generally, and possibly, soften the meaning of a statement and leave more room for an alternative to be correct. (A word of caution: The test item writers know these rules too!)
4. Often, first instincts are correct, so if you are unsure of an answer, you may want to go with the first answer that comes to mind.
5. Answer the easy questions first and then go back to the harder ones so that you do not spend too much time on any one item. If you skip an item, be sure to also "skip" the item on the answer sheet.
6. If you don't know what the answer is to a question before looking at the alternatives, first eliminate those choices that are clearly wrong. This increases the chance of picking the correct answer. After eliminating the obviously wrong answers, pick the best alternative from those that are left.
7. Be careful not to be misled by alternatives that are only partially true. Read all the choices and choose the best answer.
8. When reading test questions, you may mark in the test booklet. Here are some suggestions if a question is confusing to you:
 - a. Use slash marks (/) to break up sentences into smaller segments. This will make you attentive to each piece of information.
 - b. Circle key words that tell what the sentence is all about. This will help you get a "handle" on the sentence and will make it easier if you have to hunt for an

answer later.

c. Underline words that harden or soften the meaning.

d. Put marks next to each alternative (e.g., "g" = "clearly a good answer," "x" = "clearly a bad answer"). When rereading the question or answers, these notations will save time.

9. There is no penalty for incorrect answers on this examination, so even if you must guess, answer every question.
10. If you have time, go back and look at every question and answer. Make any changes that are necessary, but keep #6 in mind--first instincts are often correct.
11. Remember, test monitors are there to assist all candidates with procedures and to help them perform to the best of their ability. However, they cannot provide answers that will give clues to the correct response. If you have any questions, ask for assistance before the examination begins or whenever a question arises.

E. ERROR ANALYSIS

Each one of us has weak areas in our test-taking behavior. There are several possible reasons for choosing an incorrect response. Once you've identified those potential problems, they can be avoided. The following are six possible reasons for incorrectly answering a question along with possible methods of avoiding those errors.

1. You have accidentally marked the wrong space on the answer sheet.

Since there are a limited number of questions on the exam, careless errors are costly. Check each answer choice on the answer sheet to ensure you are marking the answer you have chosen. As an additional check, after you complete the exam, go back over every question and make sure the answers on the answer sheet match the answers you meant to mark. This will be easier if you circle the selected alternative in the test booklet as you go through the test.

2. You have misread a question or answer by overlooking a key word or phrase.

The solution to this problem is UNDERLINING. Underlining makes those key words and phrases stand out when choosing an answer. Once you have underlined the key words and phrases, check the details of the possible answers with the details you underlined, one by one. If every detail doesn't match, consider that answer suspect and try another. Always keep in mind you're looking for the best possible answer.

3. You do not know the meaning of one or more key terms.

This could be a problem in PREPARATION and/or VOCABULARY. Underline key terms and make sure you know what they mean as part of your study process. If an unfamiliar term is a technical term, it most likely will be defined in the books. If an unfamiliar term is not a technical term, go to a dictionary and look it up. It is a good idea to build your own glossary of terms and their meanings.

When taking the exam, if you have difficulty with a term, reread the sentence to

determine its overall meaning without worrying about the meaning of a particular word. Try to understand the general message of the sentence or paragraph. The meaning of the unfamiliar word should become clearer once you understand the general context within which it has been placed.

4. **You may have been unable to distinguish the important and unimportant parts of a question because it was complicated or difficult to understand.**

First of all, these are the questions you probably should skip until the end of the test. These are also the questions on which you can use the slash mark technique discussed earlier.

This technique is called divide and conquer. Use slash marks to break up the material into small segments, and then concentrate on one segment at a time. When you do go back to these difficult questions, first read the possible answers before reading the question. This tells you what to concentrate on while reading the question. Read for the general meaning and do not get bogged down by individual words or phrases you do not understand.

5. **You may miss a question because you are simply unaccustomed to comparing combinations of information.**

This is a problem of re-arranging information in the correct way so that it makes sense. Circle critical pieces of information and then compare the information with the possible answers point by point. Also, concentrate on eliminating the wrong answers first.

6. **You may have selected an answer that "looked good."**

Some questions have incorrect answer choices that look good because they are partly correct. There are a number of factors that can cause you to fall for incorrect answers that look good:

- a. Don't rely too much on the similarity of the wording of the question and an answer choice. An incorrect answer may contain an exact phrase from the question.
- b. An incorrect answer may contain a phrase or sentence that is used out of context. For example, an idea which is expressed in the reading material but then rejected may be used as a wrong answer choice.
- c. An incorrect answer may overstate what the question has stated. For example, if the correct response based upon the source says, "Some police officers....," the incorrect answer may say, "All police officers..."

Listed below are some specific strategies for avoiding the tendency to fall for incorrect answers that look good:

- a. Have an answer in mind before you look over the alternatives. This will make you less susceptible to choosing an answer that looks good.
- b. Do not forget to use the method of marking each alternative to indicate what you think about it (e.g., bad, good, or possible) before choosing one.

- c. Stick strictly to the facts or rules of a question and don't fall for answers that stretch or exaggerate the facts or rules described in the test question itself. This is the time to watch out for words that harden or soften a phrase such as only, never, always, whenever, all, etc.

F. APPEAL PROCEDURES

Candidates will be permitted to mark their answers in their test booklets during the test for later use during the appeal period. These markings are solely for the candidate's own use. The official computer answer sheets are the **ONLY** documents that will be used to determine the candidates' raw scores.

No appeals will be accepted at the test site on the test date. However, candidates will be permitted to submit appeals on phases I and II during a three-day period following the test administration. Candidates will be provided with the answer keys and their own test booklets. Candidates must bring their own source material to reference for appeals, and are strictly prohibited from writing in those source materials or from removing any test materials (original, machine-copied, or hand-copied notes) from the appeal site. Cell phone usage is prohibited in the appeal room and only exam candidates are permitted. Include

Basis of Appeals: Candidates must indicate the basis on which the appeal is being filed. Appeals which are ambiguous, do not refer to one of the four reasons listed below, or are unsubstantiated, may be summarily dismissed. For each appeal submitted, the candidate must clearly indicate the reason the appeal is being filed and explain their rationale. An item may be appealed for one of the following reasons **ONLY**:

1. No correct alternative: The appellant must specify the reason the keyed alternative is incorrect.
2. Multiple equally correct alternatives: The appellant must demonstrate that an unkeyed alternative is at least as proper as the keyed alternative.
3. Item not based on source material: The appellant must demonstrate that the item was based solely on reference material not included on the reading list.
4. Incorrectly keyed alternative: The appellant must demonstrate that the keyed alternative is incorrect **AND** a different alternative is correct.

Resolution of Appeals: Each appeal submitted will be reviewed by subject matter experts (sergeant and above). In the event an appeal for one of the reasons outlined in 1-3 is granted, the item will be deleted. If an appeal is granted on the basis that the alternative was incorrectly keyed (4), the key will be corrected. ***The decisions of these appeals are final.***

SECTION IV: PHASE III—WRITTEN WORK SAMPLE

A. TEST FORMAT

The third phase of the examination will be a written work sample. This phase will focus mainly on the task categories of supervision, investigations and report writing/paperwork. The written work sample is designed to assess those task categories which are not easily tested in a multiple-choice format. You will be presented with a number of problems typical of the tasks performed by a Columbus Police Sergeant on a day-to-day basis. You may be required to take direct action such as completing a report or writing a memo, or you may merely be asked to describe what actions you would take to handle a task or problem. The items could involve issues such as developing a training program, handling a personnel issue or responding to a tactical situation. You will be asked to respond to each situation in writing and will be given some information to guide your responses.

You will be permitted to use a NON-ELECTRONIC dictionary, as well as all of the reading sources listed for phases I, and II, during this phase of the examination. All candidates must bring their own sources to the exam. **YOU MAY NOT SHARE SOURCES DURING THE EXAMINATION.** Sources will be subject to inspection at the test site to ensure that no additional summary pages have been added.

B. SCORING PROCEDURE

The scoring key will be in the check-off format with keyed responses developed by subject matter experts. Each item on the key may be weighted based on importance as determined during exam development and may contain negative points. For each keyed response, a candidate either gets credit or not. Each exercise will be graded initially by two Commission staff personnel analysts. (The answer key may have built in safeguards so those candidates who give contradictory responses or fail to make necessary decisions will not receive full credit or may receive negative credit.) If the initial two graders do not agree if a given response should or should not be given credit, that response will be scored by a third grader, who will serve as a tie breaker.

C. CLERICAL REVIEW/APPEAL

All candidates will be given an opportunity to participate in a clerical review process. At the clerical review, candidates may check the accuracy of the scoring process, and petition for additional points. In the event a candidate believes a response they provided is consistent with the key but was not awarded points, the candidate may petition for a review of the given response. Subject matter experts from the Division of Police will conduct the petition reviews and make recommendations as to whether or not points should be awarded based upon the petitions filed. Only petitions for items in which candidates did not receive credit will be considered for credit during the petition process.

A limited appeals process will also take place during the clerical review, during which candidates may appeal to remove items from the answer key which they believe are incorrect. Decisions which result in the deletion of an item from the answer key will affect the answer key for all candidates participating in the examination.

The scheduled dates and times for the clerical review are November 5 through November 6, 2015 and November 9 through November 10, 2015 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Petitions will be determined on a case-by-case basis with a minimum of one subject matter expert reviewing each petition.

SECTION V: PHASE IV—ORAL BOARD EXAMINATIONS

A. TEST FORMAT

The last part of the promotional examination is the oral board. Candidates will submit preferences (*morning or afternoon time blocks*) at the Phase III test. Oral board times will then be scheduled taking candidate preferences into consideration as much as possible. Candidates will be notified of their scheduled date and time.

On the test day, you will be given two different scenarios for which you must develop solutions. You will then present these solutions to two separate boards. You will see a different board for each scenario. You will be given 60 minutes to prepare your responses to the scenarios. You may make notes or outlines during this time. In the typical oral board exam, candidates will have 8-10 minutes to present the solutions to the board and answer questions from board members.

The oral board scenarios may be of a number of different types. For example, one type of scenario might require the candidate to have a one-on-one discussion with a subordinate experiencing some difficulties. These difficulties might relate to performance, discipline, or personal problems. Candidates should be aware that this type of exercise may be an interactive role-play involving the candidate and one board member playing the role of the individual involved in the situation described.

Another type of scenario might require the candidate to address a group consisting of three subordinates. (The roles of this three-member group would be played by the panel of board members.) The candidate may be asked to provide feedback to a recent arrest with the group or to cover some other issue that is relevant to the position being tested. The board members will make comments and ask questions during the scenario. Likewise, the candidate may ask questions of the board members. For this second type of oral exercise, the board members will all be seated facing the candidate as they play the roles of the subordinates. The candidate will sit when addressing the group.

Another type of role-play scenario might require you to address a group of civilians on a topic such as community policing or public safety. Again, the assessors will play the roles of the civilians, and there would be interaction between you and board members.

Another type of scenario might be a structured interview where the assessors will have a predetermined set of questions to ask and you will be expected to respond to these questions. This interview will **not** be a role-play. You may be expected to explain how you would handle a situation rather than a role where you actually do it. The primary questions are provided in to candidates during the preparation period. Follow-up questions (if included as part of a structured interview) are typically not provided in advance of the exercise.

The scenarios may be any of several different types or a combination of the different types. The goal is to present the candidate with job-related, realistic problems that will have to be resolved orally. Instructions for each problem will specify the form in which candidates are to provide their responses. If a member (or members) of the board will play a role in the candidate's problem, the explanation of the problem will state that. If follow up questions are written into the scenario, the board members will state something akin to, "Now we will ask you three follow up questions." The oral board members who

administer an exercise will **not** also grade that exercise.

At the designated time, candidates will be seated in a preparation room, given the scenarios, source materials from the reading list and provided the opportunity to prepare for the oral interviews. They will not be observed by the assessors during this preparation period. Candidates should **not** bring any source materials to the test site for this exam. Civil Service will provide source materials from the reading list to all candidates. However, candidates will **not** be permitted to bring source materials into the board rooms when they participate in the actual oral presentations.

Only scenarios provided by Civil Service and notes prepared by the candidate during the preparation period may be carried into the oral exercises. Candidates will be permitted to use any notes during the exercises that were generated during the preparation period. All such notes will be collected following each candidate's second oral exercise.

Each live oral exercise will be video-recorded and scored on a subsequent day by two panels of three raters. On exercise one, you will be graded by six oral board members, and on exercise two you will be graded by six different oral board members. Therefore, once you have completed both oral board exercises, your performance will result in twelve sets of ratings.

B. SCORING PROCEDURE

Three individuals will sit on each board and observe and evaluate candidate performance via video recordings. All raters will be uniformed police officers of a rank equivalent to the rank being tested or above, from jurisdictions outside the State of Ohio. These individuals will receive extensive training that is tailored to the Columbus police promotional oral board process.

You will be evaluated on four dimensions: oral communication, interpersonal relations, information analysis, and problem sensing and resolution. A description of these dimensions is provided later in this booklet. The oral board members will evaluate independently. After the independent scoring, the oral board members may discuss the scores and are given an opportunity to adjust their scores. The second score provided by oral board members will be used to calculate the candidate scores.

The scale used by the board members to rate the candidate has 9 points; 1 is the lowest possible score and 9 is the highest possible score. The average score for a dimension will be the average of the 12 rater scores for that dimension. So, the highest possible score for any dimension is 9 points. The average of the four average dimension scores is the final score for the oral board.

Table 2: Oral Board High Score by Rater and Oral Board

Scenario One, Board One							
Raters	Dimension OC	Dimension IR	Dimension IA	Dimension PSR	Sub Total	Total	Average per Rater
Rater A	9	9	9	9	36	108	36
Rater B	9	9	9	9	36		
Rater C	9	9	9	9	36		
Scenario One, Board Two							+
Raters	Dimension OC	Dimension IR	Dimension IA	Dimension PSR	Sub Total	Total	Average per Rater
Rater D	9	9	9	9	36	108	36
Rater E	9	9	9	9	36		
Rater F	9	9	9	9	36		
Scenario Two, Board Three							+
Raters	Dimension OC	Dimension IR	Dimension IA	Dimension PSR	Sub Total	Total	Average per Rater
Rater G	9	9	9	9	36	108	36
Rater H	9	9	9	9	36		
Rater I	9	9	9	9	36		
Scenario Two, Board Four							+
Raters	Dimension OC	Dimension IR	Dimension IA	Dimension PSR	Sub Total	Total	Average per Rater
Rater J	9	9	9	9	36	108	36
Rater K	9	9	9	9	36		
Rater L	9	9	9	9	36		
							=
FINAL SCORE							144

SECTION VI: ORAL BOARD DIMENSIONS

A. ORAL COMMUNICATION

Oral communication can be defined as having two basic components:

1. The ability to make one's thoughts or ideas understood by others.

This involves the ability to organize thoughts and express them in a clear and logical manner. Candidates who speak slowly and distinctly, enunciating clearly to the oral board members, will be able to communicate their ideas better than candidates who rush or mumble.

2. The ability to understand thoughts or ideas expressed by others.

Oral communication also involves the ability to listen and accurately comprehend what others are saying or asking. Candidates who do not take the time to listen to what is being said or asked run the risk of misinterpreting information. As a result, candidates whose answers are not focused and rambling present themselves as being confused and unable to comprehend the information presented.

*The following guidelines or strategies may help candidates enhance their **oral communication** skills:*

Outlining during preparation is one strategy that can help to enhance candidate's communication skills. Thoughts and ideas will generally come across more clearly if they have been organized on paper. An outline can be very useful for generating oral responses to the scenarios.

Descriptions of Good Performance:

- Presents an organized, detailed outline of steps taken to gain control of the situation
- Expresses ideas clearly and concisely
- Listens carefully during both the role-play and follow-up questions
- Answers questions completely and precisely

Descriptions of Poor Performance:

- Presents confused or unclear plan of action
- Voices ideas randomly and/or several at a time
- Does not answer questions asked by raters
- Responds to only portions of questions
- Contradicts self or previous statements
- Talks too long without making a point

B. INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS

Interpersonal Relations can be defined as having two basic components:

1. The ability to work with other individuals in a cooperative and constructive manner
2. The ability to consider and respect the feelings, needs, and viewpoints of others

Interpersonal Relations involves the ability to establish and maintain cooperative and constructive working relationships with individuals and/or groups. Those candidates who are insensitive to the needs of others typically convey that insensitivity during the role-playing situations.

Candidates should be able to talk to others in a manner that is not demeaning or arrogant, thus establishing positive relationships during the sessions. However, having good interpersonal ability does not mean being wishy-washy or indecisive. Good performance requires the demonstration of sensitivity along with the assertiveness necessary to function in the position.

*The following guidelines or strategies may help candidates enhance their **interpersonal relations** skills:*

- a. eliciting the input of others, particularly those individuals who may have trouble speaking up on their own
- b. avoiding the tendency to interrupt others
- c. giving others full attention when they speak by listening to and looking at them
- e. complimenting or giving credit to others for good ideas or performance
- f. disagreeing with others in a non-threatening manner
- g. offering support and assistance to individuals experiencing problems
- h. focusing on ineffective behavior when discussing performance problems rather than individual personality characteristics

Descriptions of Good Performance:

- Conveys empathy and respect
- Remains open and sensitive
- Asks questions and elicits information without being judgmental or condescending
- Initiates corrective action in a supportive, positive way

Descriptions of Poor Performance:

- Approaches others with disdain or arrogance
- Asks questions in an accusatory tone
- Adopts a condescending attitude
- Offers little or no help in resolving problem(s)
- Argues intensely when challenged or attacked
- Initiates corrective action in a non-supportive, negative way

C. INFORMATION ANALYSIS

Information analysis can be defined as having two basic components:

1. Distinguishing relevant from irrelevant information and focusing on the relevant information when resolving problems or performing tasks
2. Seeking out additional information that is needed to resolve problems or accomplish tasks

Information analysis begins with the ability to research and seek out information. It involves the ability to identify and include all relevant information in the presentation. When preparing, candidates should consider all facts relating to the problem and should be able to distinguish important from unimportant information. Candidates should present a plan of action encompassing all important information. Those candidates who include trivial information in their presentation are wasting time and indicate to the oral board that they really do not understand the important aspects of a problem.

When presenting the problem during a role-play, candidates should be specific with regard to the reasons for the solutions they offer to the problems. Candidates who consider possible causes of the problem and address solutions based on the underlying causes will convey to the oral board members a clear understanding of the problem. Candidates who listen carefully to information related by the board members during the role-play period and incorporate this information into their response will fare better than candidates who respond without carefully listening to the questions.

*The following guidelines or strategies may help candidates enhance their **information analysis** skills:*

1. **Underlining:** Underlining the important parts of the scenario description during preparation helps to focus upon the important information.
2. **Outlining:** Outlining helps to organize available information and clarify what additional information is needed to make a sound decision.

Descriptions of Good Performance:

- Considers all available information
- Asks questions designed to elicit additional information
- Looks at underlying as well as surface issues
- Disregards unimportant or irrelevant factors
- Develops a logical plan of action

Descriptions of Poor Performance:

- Recognizes only surface issues
- Fails to consider all aspects of the situation
- Concentrates on unimportant or irrelevant details
- Develops an incomplete or illogical plan of action

D. PROBLEM SENSING & RESOLUTION

The category of problem sensing and resolution can be defined as having three basic components:

1. Evaluating situations to identify problems and issues
2. Evaluating and considering the implications of alternative solutions to problems and issues
3. Deciding on a solution to a problem or issue on the basis of the evaluation of that problem/issue

Problem sensing and resolution involves the ability to critically evaluate a situation and formulate an effective, logical solution. Candidates who are able to evaluate alternative solutions to the problem will perform better than candidates who stick to only one possible solution or outcome.

Candidates should convey to the oral board members that they are aware of the implications of both the problem and the solutions they propose. Candidates who only touch the surface of the problem and concentrate on easy solutions convey to the oral board that they do not fully comprehend the problem or the consequences of their actions.

*The following guidelines or strategies may help candidates enhance their **problem sensing and resolution** skills:*

- a. Identify the key components of the issue that should be considered.
- b. Generate and consider alternative courses of action or solutions. When evaluating potential solutions to problems, candidates should consider the impact of each solution on all individuals who could be affected by the solution. This would include those individuals who decide on the solution, as well as those individuals who must implement, abide by, and enforce the solution.
- c. Consider the short and long-range implications of decisions that are made, since some solutions may be beneficial only for the short term, while others may be more beneficial for the long term.
- d. Take steps to minimize any potentially troublesome "side-effects" of the chosen solution.

Descriptions of Good Performance:

- Thoroughly considers all relevant information
- Develops alternative approaches to deal with a problem
- Critically evaluates alternative solutions
- Presents logical support for decisions

Descriptions of Poor Performance:

- Considers only a portion of the available information
- Jumps to conclusions without supporting evidence
- Fails to consider alternatives
- Uses little or no logic to reach conclusions
- Is unable to support conclusions with facts or logic

SECTION VII: CONCLUSION

The 2015 Police Sergeant promotional exam consists of four phases, which start in early October and end during the first week of November. There will be information sessions available to all candidates on September 15 and September 17, 2015. The City of Columbus Civil Service Commission strongly recommends that each candidate hones his or her study skills, including concentration, reading comprehension, note-taking, memory and visualization. Phase I of the exam process is the open-book multiple-choice exam, and phase II is the closed-book multiple-choice exam. There is an appeals process, as well as a clerical review for the multiple-choice phases. Phase III is the written work sample, for which there is a clerical review. Phase IV is the oral board; the Commission strongly recommends that each candidate study the four dimensions on which he or she will be scored.

In conclusion, the City of Columbus Civil Service Commission wishes you the best of luck in the promotional process. Thank you.